



**TITLE:** DEFCO Construction Company collection

**DATE RANGE:** 1960-1976

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1496

**LOCATION:** Arizona History Museum, 949 E Second St, Tucson, AZ 85719

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** .25 linear feet (1 box)

**PROVENANCE:** Donated by Timothy M. Esslinger, 2011.

**RESTRICTIONS ON USE:** Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to Arizona Historical Society, Library & Archives.

**PREFERRED CITATION:** Arizona Historical Society, DEFCO Construction Company collection, MS 1496

**PROCESSED BY:** This collection was formerly in the small manuscripts collection (SMS 13). Tory Bellavance reprocessed the collection in 2018.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** DEFCO Construction Company was formed in 1960 by William B. Esslinger, in association with William N. Damron and Jim Frasier. Shortly thereafter, Esslinger acquired a controlling stake of the company's shares. In 1966, L.G. Lefler joined the company; however, Esslinger remained in control. Esslinger's wife, Mary C., was also heavily involved in the company's management, holding the title of secretary-treasurer and office manager. The subsequent success of the company is largely attributed to the efforts of both Esslingers.

DEFCO became one of the major contracting firms in Arizona. Although primary activities were focused on the construction of buildings, the firm also worked in all aspects of general contracting, as well as a subcontractor for operations such as grading, excavation, concrete, and carpentry work. In 1979, William Esslinger underwent open heart surgery and upon his recuperation, decided to leave his position at DEFCO. An agreement was reached in 1980 in which L.G. Lefler and the DEFCO Corporation purchased all of the Esslinger holdings.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:** This collection contains historical information of the DEFECO Construction Company, including a list of key personnel, completed projects, and biographical information on William Esslinger. There is also a brochure detailing DEFECO projects and general operation, and various issues of *Constructor Engineer* magazine featuring articles about DEFECO's safety award, construction of the Arizona Bank Plaza, and overall success of the company. The collection also contains photographs of important DEFECO projects.

**SUBJECT TERMS:** Construction industry -- Arizona -- Tucson; Business enterprises -- Arizona -- Tucson

**RELATED MATERIALS:** Places-Arizona-Tucson-business-construction-Defco Construction [ephemera file], Places-Arizona-Tucson-business-construction-Lefler [ephemera file]

**CONTAINER LIST:**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>1</b>	1	Events and Publicity	1973-1976
	2	History	1960-1976
	3	Photos, Projects and Events	1964-1976
	4	Photos, Completed Projects	1963-1967